G.E. Graven

Style & Voice Reference Guide

Grotesque: A Gothic Epic · gothicnovel.org

This guide captures the essential writing style, tone, vocabulary, and technique of G.E. Graven's Grotesque: A Gothic Epic. It is intended as a reference for proofreading, editing, and generating new content consistent with Graven's established literary voice.

I. STYLE ARCHETYPE

Archetype	Medieval-Epic Gothic with a Scriptural Backbone
Closest Comparisons	Mervyn Peake, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, early Umberto Eco
Mode	Cinematic epic — scenes staged and lit like paintings
Structure	Braided multi-threaded plotting; four interwoven storylines with chronological spine

II. TONE

Graven's tone is **grave, consecrated, and operatic**. There is no irony or modern distance — the medieval world is treated with complete reverence. The prose carries a solemn, almost **liturgical weight**, as though the narrator is bearing witness to sacred events.

No irony or self-awareness	*The world is taken wholly seriously; dark humour is absent.*
Dread through accumulation	*Unease builds via environment and sensation — not shock or gore.*
Portentous even in action	*Even fast-paced sequences maintain a measured, weighty cadence.*
Morally serious	*Characters act within a clearly felt cosmic moral framework.*
Reverent & consecrated	*Language treats supernatural and sacred events as genuinely holy.*

III. VOCABULARY LEVEL

Elevated and period-conscious — firmly in the **upper register of literary fiction**, but readable. Archaic and ecclesiastical terms are deployed naturally, without affectation.

Characteristic vocabulary includes:

refectory	*buttresses*	*septicemic*	*pneumonic*
communiqué	*betwixt*	*casement*	*sergeant-at-arms*
vaulted	*flying buttresses*	*apocryphal*	*Grigori*
Nephilim	*liturgical*	*portent*	*fervent*
supplication	*sanctified*	*abomination*	*vespers*

*Sentence construction frequently echoes the cadences of the **King James Bible**, particularly in moments of prophecy, proclamation, or divine encounter.*

IV. SIGNATURE TECHNIQUES

- **Nature as Harbinger** — Birds fall silent, leaves spiral, wildlife flees before supernatural events arrive. The natural world consistently announces the uncanny before it appears.
- **Scale Contrast** — Colossal beings and cosmic events are juxtaposed with intimate human gestures — a spilled bowl, a hare freezing in moonlight. The macro and micro are in constant dialogue.
- **Sensory Layering** — Sight, sound, smell, and physical sensation are stacked to achieve total immersion. Landscapes unfurl like scrolls; terrain liquefies into hazy sky; moonlit hills glow gold.
- **Mythological Density** — Grigori, Nephilim, Gorgons, Titans, and Cyclops appear as a unified supernatural host, drawing from multiple traditions simultaneously without contradiction.
- **Atmospheric Dread** — Distorted perception, strange odours, muffled sounds, and perpetually spooked horses build unease gradually. Horror is felt before it is seen.
- **World-as-Argument** — Settings breathe and exert moral pressure. A location — abbey, mountain pass, plague city — carries thematic weight equal to any character.

V. PROSE RHYTHM & STRUCTURE

- Long, cumulative sentences that build atmosphere before releasing into shorter declarative beats.
- Descriptive passages carry conceptual and thematic weight — they are never purely decorative.
- Dialogue is crisp and confrontational; it carries plot load efficiently while descriptive prose does atmospheric work.
- Scenes are staged cinematically, with a strong sense of visual composition and theatrical entrance/exit.
- Chapters move between macro-scale panorama (civilisations, armies, angels) and intimate close focus.

VI. EDITORIAL & PROOFREADING GUIDELINES

When proofreading or editing work intended to match Graven's style, apply the following standards:

Vocabulary	Preserve or elevate archaic and ecclesiastical terms. Do not modernise period-specific language.
Tense	Graven writes in consistent past tense. Flag any present-tense intrusions in narrative passages.
Tone	Remove irony, casual register, or contemporary idiom. Maintain solemnity throughout.
Punctuation	British-adjacent conventions. Em dashes for dramatic interruption or apposition. Semicolons preferred over conjunctions in long compound sentences.
Capitalisation	Capitalise supernatural beings and titles (the Grigori, the Nephilim, the Abbot). Follow Graven's established usage from source text.
Sensory Detail	If a passage feels thin, augment with layered sensory detail consistent with setting — never generic; always specific to place and era.
Dialogue	Keep dialogue lean and purposeful. Avoid adverb-heavy dialogue tags; use 'said' or action beats instead.

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